

**APPENDIX H: HEALTHY FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES TASK FORCE –
RESOLUTION FOR THE FUNDING OF HUMAN SERVICES IN KING COUNTY**



Healthy Families and Communities Task Force (HFC)

Resolution for the Funding of Human Services in King County

WHEREAS, the Healthy Families and Communities Task Force (HFC) was convened in July 2005 by King County Executive Ron Sims to determine the amount of financing needed to address the funding gap for regional human services in the county; to identify a new revenue source dedicated to regional human services, including the detailed requirements for a future ballot measure; to develop the charge, membership and appointment process of a Regional Human Services Board to be included in the ballot measure; and to develop a public education process on the human services need in King County; and

WHEREAS, the regional human services considered by the HFC are those that were identified by the Regional Policy Committee of the Metropolitan King County Council in 2003 and were divided into the following five community goal areas adopted by King County, United Way, Seattle, Bellevue and the South King County Human Services Forum:

1. Food to eat and a roof overhead
2. Supportive relationships within families, neighborhoods, and communities
3. Safe haven from all forms of violence and abuse
4. Health care to be as physically and mentally fit as possible
5. Education and job skills to lead an independent life; and

WHEREAS, the King County Office of Management and Budget used data compiled by the prior Task Force on Regional Human Services and employed various econometric measures to determine that the financing needed to close the funding gap for human services in the county is approximately \$83.1 million dollars; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Legislature in its 2006 Supplemental Operating Budget included \$2.5 million for the 2-1-1 network, which provides information about the various community services available in the county; and

WHEREAS, King County voters approved the Veterans and Human Services Levy in November of 2005 expected to raise approximately \$13.3 million, half to

fund services for veterans, military personnel and their families and the other half to fund regional human services to a wide range of low-income people in need; and

WHEREAS, state law RCW 82.14.460 allows counties to impose a 0.1 percent countywide sales tax increase for mental health and substance abuse services which in King County has been estimated to raise \$47 million; and

WHEREAS, the HFC has reviewed all potential sources of revenue for regional human services and has identified the veterans and human services levy and the 0.1 percent sales tax increase as possible sources of funding to reduce the overall funding gap for these services; and

WHEREAS, the HFC agreed that the most fiscally responsible and politically viable method to reducing the funding gap is a comprehensive approach that is targeted; and

WHEREAS, the HFC seeks to support and enhance the ability of our children, families and residents with special needs to achieve and maintain healthier, safer, more productive and independent lives within their communities:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the HFC recommends the following package of funding for the un-met regional human services need in King County:

I. Veterans and Human Services Levy –

Total estimated gap reduction: \$7.65 million

The HFC recommends that the portion of the Veterans and Human Services Levy dedicated to human services, approximately \$6.65 million, be used to fund a portion of the regional human services gap. In addition, we recommend that a portion of the levy funds dedicated to veteran services be used to fund \$1 million in special needs housing services for veterans identified under our plan.

II. Outreach, Information and Referral Services –

Total estimated gap reduction: \$1.3 million

The regional human services being considered by the HFC include \$1.3 million for outreach, information and referral assistance to improve access to community services in the county. The state legislature allocated \$2.5 million dollars in its 2006 supplemental operating budget for the statewide 2-1-1 line, which provides residents with information on community services. The new state funding covers the \$1.3 million gap in funding needed to ensure adequate access to needed services.

III. Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services –

Total estimated gap reduction: \$26.08 million

In 2005 the Washington State Legislature approved RCW 82.14.460, allowing counties to impose a 0.1 percent sales tax increase to fund mental health and chemical dependency services. This sales tax increase requires a vote by the King County Council but does not require voter approval. This sales tax increase will raise an estimated \$47 million. The law provides for new or expanded chemical dependency, mental health treatment services and therapeutic court programs.

The HFC has identified a \$26.08 million funding gap for counseling and/or substance abuse services for the homeless, mental health and substance abuse diversion and transition services for high risk youth and adults in the criminal justice system, and other counseling and supportive services. These services are those strictly funded by the county and could be expanded with funds raised by the sales tax increase.

We therefore recommend that the King County Council approve a 0.1 percent sales tax increase by December 31, 2007 to fund the \$26.08 million unmet need for mental health counseling and substance abuse services we have identified in the county.

IV. Ballot Measure Options –

Total estimated funding gap: \$48.07 million

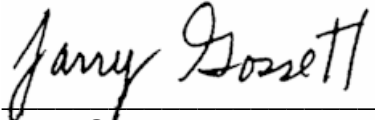
A funding gap of \$48.07 million remains after deducting the \$7.65 million from the Veterans and Human Services Levy, \$1.3 million from the state funding for the information and referral services and \$26.08 million from sales tax for mental health and substance abuse services. The HFC recognizes that the most viable vehicle for funding the remaining gap is a property tax increase.

The HFC recommends that the Executive develop a clear and cohesive strategy to place two or three property tax measures before the voters, which together will close the remaining \$48.07 million gap. The HFC understands that many variables will contribute to a ballot measure's success, including the ballot language and the number of tax measures that appear before the voters. We therefore recommend that the specific timing, sequencing and content of these proposed ballot measures be decided by the Executive and County Council after gauging voter attitude through research such as polling and focus groups. The HFC encourages the Executive and County Council to give these ballot measures their highest priority.


V. Other potential sources of revenue for human services

We recommend that the Executive research additional funding mechanisms (such as taxes used for debt payment and additional license fees) as sources of dedicated revenue to human services.

DATED this 27th day of April, 2006.



Larry Gossett,
King County Councilmember



Kathy Keolker,
Mayor of Renton